

Wells Fargo and Company

1852

Wells Fargo and Company, founded in 1852 by Henry Wells, William George FARGO, and others, provided express, banking, and mail services to the Pacific coast. The wide variety of business products offered made the Wells Fargo office a town's link to the rest of the world. In 1866, with the purchase of the Overland Mail Company and Ben Holladay's stagecoach empire, Wells Fargo controlled overland stagecoaching. The company adjusted to the railroad era and spread across the United States. In 1888, it had a direct rail route to New York City. The beginning of government parcel post delivery in 1912 crippled the express business, and in 1918, Wells Fargo's express offices and other express carriers became part of the American Railway Express.

In 1905, Wells Fargo Bank, headquartered in San Francisco, separated from the express business. The bank formed a one-bank holding company, Wells Fargo and Company, in 1968. Today, after mergers with American Trust Company in 1960 and Crocker Bank in 1986, Wells Fargo is a major California bank.

Bibliography: Beebe, Lucius, and Clegg, Charles, U.S. West: The Saga of Wells Fargo (1949); Loomis, Noel, Wells Fargo (1968); Wells Fargo Bank, Wells Fargo Since 1852 (1988).

**WELLS, FARGO & COMPANY** was an early American express organization. Henry Wells and William G. Fargo founded the company in 1852. They planned an express service from San Francisco to New York City, with the American Express Company serving as eastern representative. In 1866, Benjamin Holladay sold his overland mail and stagecoach business to Wells, Fargo & Company, which soon became the most powerful firm in the Far West.

Wells, Fargo & Company carried passengers, freight, and mail. It specialized in shipping gold and silver from western mines. It also developed a banking business on the Pacific Coast.

The firm lost heavily after the completion of the Central-Union Pacific in 1869. Wells, Fargo & Company merged with the six other major express companies in 1918 to form the American Railway Express Company.

W. TURRENTINE JACKSON

See also FARGO, WILLIAM GEORGE.

**WELSBACH, VELS bahk, BARON VON** (1858-1929), CARL AUER, was an Austrian chemist and pioneer in artificial lighting. He is noted chiefly as the inventor of a gaslight called the *Welsbach mantle*. He also invented the osmium filament for electric lamps and isolated the elements neodymium and praseodymium.

Welsbach was born in Vienna, and studied chemistry at Heidelberg University. Later, he attended the University of Vienna.

K. L. KAUFMAN

See also NEODYMIUM; PRASEODYMIUM.

**WELSH.** See WALES (People).

**WELSH CORGI.** See CARDIGAN WELSH CORGI; PEMBROKE WELSH CORGI.

Fargo, William George

1844 -

William George Fargo, b. Pompey, N.J., May 20, 1818, d. Aug. 3, 1881, was an American leader in long-distance express services. He began carrying mail over a 48-km (30-mi) route when he was 13 years old. After working at a number of jobs, he formed (1844) a partnership, Wells and Company, to operate an express service between Buffalo, N.Y., and Chicago. He helped organize the American Express Company (1850) and WELLS, FARGO AND COMPANY (1852) to provide express service between the East Coast and California. The latter company soon dominated the express business west of the Mississippi. From 1862 to 1866, Fargo was mayor of Buffalo. In the 1870s he was president both of Wells, Fargo and Company and of American Express.

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# Wells Fargo: Oldest bank in the West

*19 Mar 1997*  
SALT LAKE CITY — The oldest bank in the West, Wells Fargo & Co., turned 145 Tuesday.

Many branches in Utah and throughout Wells Fargo's 10-state territory will be celebrating the day with their customers.

Founded on March 18, 1852, by Henry Wells and William Fargo to fill the financial and transportation needs of Gold Rush pioneers, the company's business flourished and expanded far from its San Francisco base as the West grew.

Wells Fargo opened an express office and banking house in Salt Lake City in 1865.

In the decades that followed, Wells Fargo became a jack-of-all-trades — selling stamps and carrying the mail, exchanging gold dust for money, making loans to merchants, moving anything and anyone within the West and around the world.

But in 1918, Wells Fargo was forced to leave all but the banking business when the U.S. government nationalized the country's express companies into a single federal entity.

Wells Fargo remained a California bank until April 1996, when it returned to Utah and much of the West with the acquisition of First Interstate.



AP photo

Wells Fargo Chairman Paul Hazen gets ready to blow out the candles on a stagecoach cake commemorating the company's 145 years in business. Henry Wells and William Fargo founded the company in 1852 to fill the financial and transportation of the Gold Rush pioneers.

## **Courageous Determined Rugged Men of the West:**

**Type:** Explorer, Fur Trapper, Mt. Man, Missionary, Artist, Photographer, Adventurer.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Birthdate:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Birthplace:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Father:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Mother:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**1st Wife:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Her birthdate** \_\_\_\_\_  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Wife:** \_\_\_\_\_ " " \_\_\_\_\_  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Wife:** \_\_\_\_\_ " " \_\_\_\_\_

**Short History:**

**Picture:**

Henry Wells <sup>& Wm G</sup> Fargo bought out Benjamin F Holladay in 1866

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W. TURRENTINE JACKSON

See also FARGO, WILLIAM GEORGE.

Wells Fargo quit stagecoach business in Aug 1869.  
"Throw down the Box", p 42

World Book  
1980



[Title of list:

## **HOLES OF THE WEST:**

January 11, 2005

Date Started:

Name of the Hole:

Location:

General:

Altitude: Latitude: Longitude:

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<b>Baptiste Brown settled there, So it was named Brown's Hole.</b>	<b>In NE Utah; now in Daggett County, called Brown's Hole, or Brown's Park.</b>
<b>Little Brown's Hole</b>	<b>In NE Utah, in Daggett Co. near Dutch John.</b>
<b>Brown's Hole</b>	<b>In San Juan Co.</b>
<b>Brown's Hole</b>	<b>In Weber Co</b>
<b>Devil's Hole</b>	<b>In Midway, Utah area.</b>
<b>Dixon's Hole</b>	<b>North of 12<sup>th</sup> North in Provo, Utah.</b>
<b>Doud's Hole</b>	<b>In Sheep Creek, Utah.</b>
<b>Jackson's Hole</b>	<b>In western Wyoming.</b>
<b>Jones's Hole</b>	<b>In Uintah Co., Utah.</b>
<b>Middle Sink</b>	<b>East of Logan, Utah.</b>
<b>Ogden's Hole</b>	<b>East of Ogden, Utah &amp; named For Peter Skeen Ogden.</b>
<b>Pierre's Hole</b>	<b>A valley in the Teton Mts. Of Idaho.</b>

Refs: 1. Tennent, William L., "John Jarvie of Brown's Park," 1981, Bureau of Land Mgt.  
2. VanCott, John W., "Utah Place Names."  
3. Lambert, Roy, "High Uintahs Hi!" 1964, Kamas, Utah.